

CIA INTERNAL USE ONLY

3 November 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF CAREER SERVICES

SUBJECT: Fitness Report Rating Standards

1. The CIA Career Council has recently reviewed the most difficult and serious problem of maintaining reasonable uniformity in the rating standards employed by rating and reviewing officers. The Council has further requested that studies be made looking toward improvement in the performance rating system. These studies are well advanced and suggested changes will soon be brought forward for Agencywide consideration. In the meantime, the Council has specifically requested that the Heads of the Career Services take action to terminate the use of special stamps or certifications attesting to the fact that the descriptive adjectives and related numerical ratings prescribed by the official Agency performance rating system have in fact been correctly applied. In some cases an entire Career Service has adopted a special stamp attesting that it has intelligently and sincerely applied the official rating scales of the Agency. In other cases only certain elements within a single Career Service have adopted such techniques to reaffirm the integrity of their ratings.

2. It is clear, of course, that officials approving and directing the use of special procedures are motivated by full awareness of the importance of maintaining meaningful and consistent interpretation and application of the established rating system. It is also seemingly implied that they have serious doubts that other elements of the Agency and even those within a given Career Service are doing so. It is for this reason that they apparently feel it is necessary to assert the integrity of their application of the rating scales in order to prevent possible adverse comparison of their personnel with those of more lax or ebullient rating and reviewing officials.

3. The maintenance of consistent standards for rating personnel is clearly a matter of prime Agency concern. It is critical to the effective application of many basic personnel policies ranging from promotions to selection-out. As a timely step it seems most desirable that action be taken by the Heads of Career Services to terminate the use of all special stamps or rating standards which seem or tend to undermine or modify the official rating standards of the Agency. It is recognized, of course, that concurrent corrective action may be necessary to educate or induce other rating officials to apply the official rating standards with greater realism and common sense.

4. In the event Heads of Career Services feel there are reasons why they cannot or should not comply with the Career Council's request, such reasons should be submitted in writing to the Director of Personnel for consideration by the Career Council.

Emmett D. Echols
Director of Personnel

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